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RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY 2934
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA CC SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RUACAAA/COMUSKOREA INTEL SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
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S E C R E T SEOUL 000120

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [KS](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: ROKG VIEWS ON CONPLAN 5029, SMA, AND AFGHANISTAN

Classified By: DCM Bill Stanton for reasons 1.4 (b/d).

1. (S) Summary. ROK National Security Advisor Kim Sung-hwan discussed the ROKG's positions on Conceptual Plan (CONPLAN) 5029, the new Special Measures Agreement (SMA), and Afghanistan during a cordial and wide-ranging 30-minute meeting at the Blue House on January 15 with United States Forces Korea (USFK) Commander General Sharp and the DCM. Kim said that CONPLAN was well prepared, but the assumptions about China were "unrealistic." Kim thought that the new SMA on burden sharing was a good agreement, but could not predict the reception it would receive in the National Assembly. Nonetheless, he expected the National Assembly to ratify the agreement in February. Kim said that the ROKG would do as much as it could to increase its support of Afghanistan, within the constraints of domestic politics, and irrespective of whether it received a request to do more from the incoming U.S. Administration. Kim requested help with the ROK Embassy's efforts to arrange meetings with NSA-designate General James Jones, Michele Flournoy (designated for Under Secretary of Defense for Policy), and Defense Secretary Gates. End summary.

Tour Normalization

2. (U) General Sharp started the meeting by noting that the Defense Secretary had approved tour normalization and that USFK was constructing a website to attract personnel. (Note: For most USFK personnel, tours are unaccompanied, one-year assignments. With normalization, tours will be accompanied, three-year assignments. End note.) Responding to an inquiry from Kim, the General stated that currently there were about 2,000 USFK families, which USFK hoped to double by the beginning of 2010. The end goal was 14,000 families.

CONPLAN 5029

3. (S) Kim said that while Conceptual Plan (CONPLAN) 5029 was well prepared, the assumptions about China were "unrealistic." General Sharp agreed, particularly with regard to contingency plans in the event China opposed U.S. and ROK military action. Kim said that since the ROKG's own CONPLAN encompassed the entire Government and not just the military, the ROKG would not be ready to discuss it until the summer.

SMA

¶4. (C) Kim thought that the SMA was a good agreement, but could not predict how the National Assembly would receive it. He believed that the SMA would pass if it were brought to a vote in committee and the plenary, but worried that opposition parties could try to block discussion in committee. Still, noting that Korean legislators of both parties would probably behave more cautiously following recent fighting on the National Assembly floor, he thought that the SMA could be ratified in February. In dealing with the media, Kim thought that the best course of action for both the Ministry of National Defense and USFK was to avoid comment on the agreement until after the National Assembly ratified it. General Sharp agreed.

Base Returns

¶5. (S) Noting that "in-kind" construction was a part of the SMA, General Sharp stressed that it was "absolutely key" that the construction of new USFK facilities had to be timely and properly executed, because problems with construction would delay USFK's realignment. Kim agreed, noting that local governments were pressing for the return of the land from which USFK forces would be withdrawn. Recounting his own meeting the previous day with Mayor Oh Se-chang of Dongducheon, General Sharp noted that local governments were counting economically on the early return of land in which their communities had already invested. General Sharp said it was possible some portions of certain bases might even be returned early if there were facilities built to which U.S. forces could go. Kim concurred with the General that returning some parcels of land around Dongducheon before 2016 was preferable to waiting until 2016 to return all the parcels at one time. Agreeing, Kim said the General should contact him if USFK encountered any impediments with funding disbursements to the housing corporations working on USFK's new facilities. Thanking Kim, General Sharp noted we were all after the same thing, but leadership on both sides would be required.

Afghanistan

¶6. (S) Turning to Afghanistan, Kim said that the ROKG would do as much as it could, within domestic political constraints, and irrespective of whether it received a request to do more from the incoming U.S. Administration. The ROKG delegation arriving in Kabul January 21 would be reviewing all possibilities for assistance the ROKG might offer. In response to General Sharp's observation on the need for police trainers, Kim said the ROKG was considering sending retired police as trainers.

Kim's Visit to Washington

¶7. (S) Kim said he was planning to visit Washington in early February and requested help with the Korean Embassy's efforts to arrange meetings with NSA-designate General James Jones and Michele Flournoy, who has been designated for Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. He also requested a courtesy call with Defense Secretary Gates and appropriate meetings at State.

¶8. (U) USFK cleared this cable.
STEPHENS